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OF  
OPIUM  
IN  
OUR OWN AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

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A DOCUMENT

BY THE REPRESENTATIVE MEETING OF THE YEARLY MEETING  
OF FRIENDS FOR NEW ENGLAND FOR

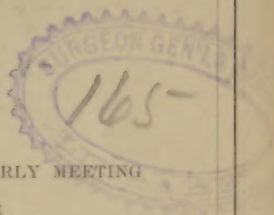
1881-1882.

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Providence:

RHODE ISLAND PRINTING COMPANY, 62 WEYBOSSET STREET.

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# OP I U M.

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The following is a minute of the Representative Meeting of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England, at a meeting of that body held in Providence, R. I., 2nd Mo. 1st, 1882 :

“The Committee under appointment relative to the traffic in and the use of opium in our own and foreign countries, presented a report which has been read. The subject elicited much interest, and our Committee is authorized to prepare the statement now presented for the press, and to procure the printing of 5000 copies for public circulation.”

A true copy.

HENRY T. WOOD,

*Clerk.*

NEW BEDFORD, 4th Mo. 20th, 1882.

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We have published the statement referred to in the foregoing minute pursuant to the directions given therein, and the same is contained in the following pages.

On behalf of the Committee.

AUGUSTINE JONES,

*Chairman.*

PROVIDENCE, R. I., 4th Mo. 24th, 1882.



# THE TRAFFIC IN AND THE USE OF OPIUM

IN OUR OWN AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

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The attention of Friends in New England has been recently called to the alarming increase in the use of opium in China, the United States and other countries. Friends in England, with other Christian denominations, have for several years labored earnestly to arouse the people and government of that country to their duty respecting the traffic in opium between British India and China.

We believe that the time has fully come when the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England should exert its influence, not only for the encouragement of those who are engaged in this philanthropic work, but also in the discharge of its own duty and responsibility, as a branch of the Christian Church.

The opium poppy is a native of Persia, and probably also of the south of Europe and Asia Minor. It is largely cultivated in those countries, and also in Egypt, Arabia and British India, for the sake of its opium.

Dr. Joseph Hooker thus describes this process:—  
“The capsules are sliced in February and March with a little instrument like a saw, made of three serrated plates tied together. From the incisions made by this instrument the opium oozes out as a milky juice, which, as it dries, becomes a soft, brown, sticky paste; each morning this paste is scraped off by means of small

shells, and collected into jars, the contents of which are afterwards made into balls of about half a pound weight; these are often coated with the seeds of some species of rheum or rhubarb plant. The balls are packed into chests and exported to other countries."

It is important to consider first the opium trade between India, China and the East, because this is largely the source and origin of the traffic elsewhere. Eastern nations generally are very fond of opium, which they smoke with their tobacco, or alone, and take in the form of pills. It is said to have greater intoxicating power over them than over the inhabitants of western countries. Drunkenness is not a national vice in China, they have no wine—but opium has greater attractions for them than for any other people in the world, and on the testimony of Chinamen themselves, the effects of opium are very destructive to health, and to all the better part of man's nature. The Chinese government has opposed the traffic from its inception.

The East India Company commenced in 1773 to export opium to China, the taste for the drug increased, and in 1776 the exports reached 1000 chests per annum, Warren Hastings being at that time the highest officer of the company in India.

In 1781 he chartered a vessel, for the purpose of selling opium in China, which was furnished with cannon and soldiers, thus beginning the trade with *force* and *violence*, as it has ever since been carried on, resulting in two opium wars.

In 1820 the number of chests had increased to 5147, and in 1833 to 20,000 annually.

The consumption of opium has grown slowly in the present century from 2000 to 100,000 chests yearly.

In 1834 the business passed out of the hands of the East India Company. It is at present a traffic which bears immense profits, gives great fortunes to numbers of merchants, and furnishes the British Government with a large portion of its Indian revenue.

The Queen's Government itself is the producer. It provides land, lends money to the cultivator, receives and stores the whole amount grown, and disposes of it by auction at periodical sales in Calcutta, to merchants who export it to China, and the proceeds of the sale are paid into the Imperial Treasury. From a recent Parliamentary Blue Book on the Progress and Condition of India, we learn the net opium revenue for 1871-72 amounted to \$38,286,065. The number of chests sold being 88,789. (A chest contains about 133½ pounds.) This includes 49,455 chests produced in Bengal and sold in Calcutta at \$695 each, the net profit on each being \$450; also 43,909 chests produced in Malwa, a native state in Central India, and exported from Bombay, paying a tax to the British Government of \$300 per chest.

The Inspector General of the Chinese Maritime Customs calculates that there are in China 1,000,000 smokers of Indian opium, who spend nearly \$85,000,000 per annum, and that all the smokers of opium in that country would number at least 2,000,000, at a cost for opium of at least \$125,000,000 annually.

The Archbishop of York said in a recent speech :—  
 “The state of the matter is this, that the Christian nation of England has been in the past continually engaged in enforcing an unwilling nation to purchase great quantities of poison, which it has grown for them, and has not scrupled to go to war even to enforce what I must call an iniquitous trade.



Now, that being so, I do say that we cannot hold up our heads among the nations of the world, if, when attention has once been directed to this matter, we allow it to slumber and sleep. \* \* \* \*

It makes the Queen herself, who is now the sovereign, the Empress of India, responsible \* \* \* \* for poisoning the people, for destroying them physically and morally, and for corrupting a whole nation that is ready to protest against the corruption. \* \* \* \*

We say that it is a wrong thing from first to last. We say that it is a disgrace and a shame to this country that a heathen people should have to ask us to hold our hands and not to force the opium upon them, and that we as a Christian people should refuse to hold our hands and with fire and sword make them take this deadly drug.”—*The Friend of China*, vol. 5, p. 16.

Canon Stowell said at the same meeting: “The controversy is between the healthy and generous instincts of Christian philanthropists and the special pleading of politician and financier, and he was sure that in the long run the former would prevail as they did in the case of the slave trade, by legislation.”

An Anti-Opium Society of Canton, China, makes the following statement of the corruption to the morals of the people arising from opium: “From Kieulung until now scarcely a hundred years have elapsed, but the deterioration of common morality has been incessant during all that period. In out-of-the-way places, where comparatively few smoke, the virtue of former times is still not gone entirely, but in cities and marts of trade where smoking is more prevalent, the corruption of morality is notorious. Human affairs are hastening on to one consummation of falsehood and hypocrisy, and there is no turning them back.” This same heathen



society calls the attention of Christian England to the teaching of its own Scriptures in the following words: "The New Testament says, 'Whatsoever ye would that others should do to you, do you to them.' Is it possible that this instruction of the Saviour has not reached the ears of your honored countrymen?"

On the 13th of 9th Mo., 1876, the Chinese Government, unable to induce the Government of England to consent to their prohibition of the importation of opium, attempted to make a treaty known as the "Chefoo Convention," a provision of which would impose a heavy duty at the port, and to a great extent prevent smuggling and limit the quantity imported.

England's plenipotentiary agreed, and the treaty was signed. Five years have elapsed, the Chinese have fulfilled the provisions of that treaty on their part, but England has not ratified it, and probably will not, although she is morally bound to do it. It is claimed on the part of England that the Chinese are not sincere in their protest against the importation of opium, that their real wish is to raise all the opium in that country for the profit of home production. On the other hand it is claimed that the raising of opium in China is permitted with the purpose, if possible, of first destroying the foreign traffic, and then its use altogether. It is admitted that China has been consistent in pressing her protest against opium in her treaties with all countries from first to last. She has recently concluded two treaties of the highest importance, the one with the United States, the other with Russia, and by both of these treaties alike the importation of opium is prohibited. She failed to secure the like provision in her recent Brazilian treaty, it is said, through British influence.

The Grand Secretary, Li Hung Chang, says: "I may take the opportunity to assert here once for all, that the single aim of my government in taxing opium will be in the future, as it has always been in the past, to repress the traffic, *never* the desire to gain revenue from such a source." He further says on another occasion: "My government is impressed with the necessity of making strenuous efforts to control this flood of opium before it overwhelms this whole country. The new treaty with the United States containing the prohibitory clause against opium encourages the belief that the broad principles of justice and feelings of humanity will prevail in future relations between China and western nations. My government will take effective measures to enforce the laws against the cultivation of the poppy in China, and otherwise check the use of opium."

The British minister at Peking for a quarter of a century, says: "It is to me vain to think otherwise of the use of the drug in China than as of a habit many times more pernicious, nationally speaking, than the gin and whiskey drinking which we deplore at home. It takes possession more insidiously, and keeps its hold to the full as tenaciously. It has ensured, in every case within my knowledge, the steady descent, moral and physical, of the smoker, and it is so far a greater mischief than drink, that it does not, by external evidence of its effects, expose its victim to the loss of reputation, which is the penalty of drunkenness."

Dr. Dudgeon, for many years Medical Missionary at Peking, who occupies a chair in a Chinese college for the study of foreign literature in that city, says: "Once habituated to the drug, everything will be endured rather than its privation. The pipe becomes the smoker's very life, and to satisfy the inexorable demands

of tyrant craving, there is nothing to which he will not stoop. In the case of poverty the wretched victim is driven to the perpetration of crime in order to secure the pipe. Time, wealth, energies, self-respect, self-control, honesty, truthfulness, honor, are all sacrificed at the flicker of the opium lamp. This new constitutional idiosyncrasy, or second nature, demands its regular periodic dose, twice, sometimes thrice or four times, and in the case of old, confirmed smokers an almost continuous supply, day and night, without which the smoker could not exist. What a slavery! none more easy to acquire, none more difficult to break off!" The Anti-Opium Society, mentioned before, says: "Finally, your countrymen come here to preach the gospel, and their object is to make many converts, and thus spread abroad the love of God to men. But their hearers continually ask, 'Why don't you go home and exhort your own people not to sell opium, since you are so bent on exhortation?' And it is impossible for the missionaries entirely to stop their mouths. On this account not only are few converts made, but the whole Christian doctrine is suspected to be an imposition."

When Bishop Schereschewsky, in 1869, was expelled from the capital of Honan province, a mob followed him shouting, "You sell poison to the people, and now you come to teach us virtue." The Bishop of Victoria said, that again and again, while preaching he has been stopped with the question, "Are you an Englishman? Is not that the country where opium comes from? Go back and stop it, and then we will talk about Christianity."

The opium habit has been found by the missionaries, not only in China and Burmah, but everywhere a very difficult obstruction to their work, both in the prejudice



which it creates against Christianity and in the deplorable condition of its victims. These persons can seldom be trusted in their religious professions. Indeed, it is a proverb in the East : "That God furnishes a means of escape from everything except the use of opium."

The importance of this matter to the missionary interests in India appears in a petition and protest just received in the British House of Commons, signed by 338 clergy, ministers and missionaries in India. The list includes the Bishop of Bombay and his clergy, twenty-two members of the Calcutta Missionary Conference, all the members of the Bombay Missionary Conference, and missionaries of all societies in every part of India.

David Hill, one of the missionaries to China who assembled at Exeter Hall, London, 3d Mo. 15th. 1882, to tell the public the truth about opium, said : "The verdict of all the 350 missionaries in China was unanimous in regard to its ruinous results."

The section of the recent treaty between the United States and China on this subject is as follows : "The governments of China and of the United States mutually agree and undertake that Chinese subjects shall not be permitted to import opium into any of the ports of the United States, and citizens of the United States shall not be permitted to import opium into any of the open ports of China, to transport it from one open port to any other open port, or to buy or sell opium in any of the open ports of China. This absolute prohibition, which extends to vessels owned by citizens or subjects of either power, to foreign vessels employed by them, or to vessels owned by the citizens or subjects of either power and employed by other persons for the transportation of opium shall be enforced by appropriate legislation on the part of China and the United States and

the benefits of the favored-nation clause in existing treaties shall not be claimed by the citizens or subjects of either power, as against the provisions of this article." President Arthur in his recent message to Congress urges the enforcement of the stipulations of the new Chinese treaty, and states that those regarding the opium trade will undoubtedly receive the approval of Congress, thus giving the moral weight of the present administration on the side of justice to China.

The following statistics, respecting the use of opium in the United States, are from the bureau of statistics in Washington: There were imported into the United States in 1869, 90,997 pounds of opium, valued in gold at \$525,802; in 1874, 170,706 pounds, valued at \$945,232; in 1877, 230,102 pounds, valued in gold at \$997,692.

And in 1869, 17,940 pounds of opium for smoking, valued in gold at \$168,718; in 1874, 53,343 pounds, valued in gold at \$556,844; in 1877, 47,428 pounds, valued in gold at \$502,662. The slight reduction this last year is due undoubtedly to a depression in business, but recent reports show a great increase.

In 1876 228,742 pounds of crude opium were imported into the United States. This shows an increase of seventy per cent. since 1867.

During the fiscal year ending 6th Mo. 30, 1880, the importations amounted to 533,451 pounds. Of this 97,000 pounds came from China, 329,575 pounds from England, and 92,633 from Turkey in Asia. This is an increase of 140 per cent. in four years. In 1876 3285 ounces of morphia were imported. In 1880 the amount received in New York alone was 8822 ounces. In 1876 there were estimated to be 200,000 opium

eaters in the United States, two-thirds of them being the well-to-do classes—many of them actors and literary persons. The figures indicate that it is probable that there are now 400,000. They consume nearly 5,000,000,000 grains annually, the imported value of which is over \$2,000,000, for which consumers have to pay over \$5,000,000.

If opium is smuggled in large quantities, as no doubt it is, the amount is to be increased. A wholesale dealer observes that much of the increase of opium imports is absorbed in cigars and cigarettes. The opium is used in a liquid state, the tobacco being saturated with a solution of greater or less strength.

A prominent druggist is reported in the *New York World* to have said: "The increased consumption of opium has followed very closely the increased use of the hypodermic syringe. A single instrument maker told me he has sold enough of these instruments within two years to supply the whole profession in the city."

The number of preparations in which opium is used is annually increasing. It forms an important ingredient in a number of quack and patent medicines. The wholesale dealers and manufacturers in New York report that it is increasing there with alarming rapidity, but that it is no worse in that city than in other parts of the country.

*Harper's Weekly* of 4th Mo. 8th, 1882, contains the statement that opium smoking has increased very rapidly in that place within a few months, and that the persons who smoke are not Chinese, but Americans, and that the smoking dens which they visit are kept by Americans and are made very attractive by their costly furniture, colored lights and various other devices. Albany consumes annually 3500 pounds of opium and 550



ounces of morphia, four-fifths of which is said to be consumed by women. The vice-president of the Illinois State Temperance League gives local statistics of towns in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky, in which there are from three to six opium eaters in every hundred of population.

And it is reported that in some of the country towns of New England morphia is sold by the grocers in large quantities. It is a significant fact in this connection that some of these towns are within the districts where prohibitory liquor laws have been most successfully enforced.

H. H. Kane, in his book on opium smoking in China and America, informs us that the first white man in America began smoking opium in 1868, the second in 1871. Now it is computed that more than 6000 American men and women smoke it, and that now there are opium dens in all the principal cities.

This cause will not at present receive the attention it merits. The world at large is not yet awakened to the impending danger, and because there is a natural apathy towards the distant and unseen. And as the watchman on the wall has a special trust and duty, because he first discovers the danger, so the Society of Friends, so Christianity, holds a responsible position where it may discern in advance the approach and in part the extent of this baneful influence.

The use of opium will in the future prove a more serious obstruction to the progress of Christianity than in the past, for the habit is extending; hence it is high time that the alarm was sounded, and the whole Christian world summoned to its duty. It may justly be questioned whether any moral cause ever more clearly demanded the force and exercise of Gospel

teachings than the opium question, with its wide and varied elements.

The hope of the world in the struggle with this evil, as with every other, lies in Christianity, which is universal, is no respecter of persons or nations, but extends its healing hand to every individual of the race. "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." And God "hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." We, as Christians, are charged with the solemn duty to teach all nations whatsoever things He has commanded us, and this injunction requires us to restrain our carnal appetites, and to teach men so to do to keep the body in subjection to the spirit, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and to labor for the extension of that kingdom. Our duty is beautifully taught by the Master himself in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The Priest and Levite, Church and State, Hypocrisy and Respectability went by on the other side, while the foreigner, the genuine neighbor and true disciple, waiving the question of sect and nationality, performed his Christian duty.

The government of England ought to feel that the Christian conviction of the world, a force more potent than armies, has irrevocably decreed that it shall do justice to China, and that it ought to be, in *fact* and in *truth*, as well as in name, a great Christian nation. But England is not the only guilty nation, if she has been more aggressive in this wrong, other nations have been grossly negligent as Christian governments, while their citizens have shared in the crime and the spoils, and to our shame it must be said that this is notably true of Americans. We think that an appeal ought to be

made in the name and in behalf of Christianity, to all the civilized governments of the world, immediately to take part in this common cause, the issues of which reach all mankind. The people of China, Burmah and elsewhere must be made to realize that Christianity was not represented in the violence of opium wars, and in wicked attempts to degrade and destroy weaker races, but that on the contrary it seeks in its purity the elevation and redemption of all men. But this subject is brought home to us when we consider that the use of opium is extending silently but surely in our own midst. That we, as individuals, are now exposed to this very peril, that it may enter our own families in some of its varied forms. The wonderful and increasing facilities for inter-communication between remote parts of the world have, in effect, reduced the size of the globe, and we are brought into nearer contact with distant countries than ever before. And this will probably be increasingly the case with the progress of invention, so that national life and character will be more influenced by foreign nations.

Neither China nor India can longer be poisoned and demoralized without sending the injury around the world. England plants a Upas tree in China whose deadly branches not only reach America, but overshadow herself with their noxious influence. Whatever nation pours poison into the circulation of the world's life current, may expect it in time to flow back upon itself with all its destructive power. The law of compensation is sure.

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small ;  
 Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.

We believe it to be our duty, as a Religious Society,



to invite the co-operation of other denominations of Christians in the formation of a healthy and well informed public opinion on the evils and extent of opium use, which are comparatively little understood. We recognize the magnitude and intricacy of the subject, and that the influence of a small Christian community like ours can do but little, yet we believe that the duty and responsibility rest none the less upon us faithfully to do our small share in this great work, leaving the results with Him, who will bless the humblest efforts in His service.





